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MAYOR WILLIAMS AWAKENS.

Mayor Williams, of Portland, has evidently at last awakened to the fact that he has been "handled" by his friends in the past. The venerable mayor has put his foot down upon this sort of business, and in vetoing the poolroom ordinance has thrown a bomb into the camp of those who supposedly believed they had the mayor under their political thumbs.

In June of this year poolrooms were closed at Portland by ordinance. In October the council passed an ordinance reopening them. This ordinance was submitted to Mayor Williams, who very properly and promptly returned it without his approval. It is not so much a question of the moral advisability of permitting poolrooms to be operated as one of the council perverting itself to suit the convenience of political manipulators. The idea that poolrooms should have been closed by the council in June and that the selfsame council should have determined to reopen them in October is painfully significant that all is not as it should be, and Mayor Williams will strengthen public confidence in thus turning down his erratic advisers.

Slowly, but surely, to go into the matter, gambling of all sorts is being forced to the wall. In the older communities of the country it has proved itself to be so great a curse that it is no longer countenanced. In the west the sentiment against it is latent. Westerners are slow to reform, but even they are banishing the evil. Portland took a very long step in the right direction when it closed the vicious slot machine, which is perhaps the most pernicious of all gambling evils. Portland's example has had its influence, and many other Oregon towns have likewise banished the device. It has been said that slot machines would soon again be permitted in Portland, but Mayor Williams' stand on the poolroom proposition indicates a determination on his part to do what is right.

Perhaps the most significant statement contained in the mayor's veto is his declaration that the plea for licensing poolrooms on the ground that the city needs the money is absurd. The mayor very properly concludes that the city must look for its money to legitimate sources, which is a sample of municipal logic that will appeal to all right-thinking persons. For many months schemers have made the mayor of Portland somewhat ridiculous, but Mr. Williams has now declared himself.

The experience through which Portland is now passing may well be observed by other Oregon cities, for it is one through which all must pass very shortly.

GOLD PRODUCTION.

It is officially stated that at the beginning of the present calendar year the stock of gold in the world at large, in the form of money, amounted to five and a half billion dollars, a gain of one billion and a half dollars since January 1, 1896. In the same period the monetary stock of gold in the United States is estimated to have increased from six hundred million dollars to over thirteen hundred million dollars. Nearly one-half of the world's increase in monetary gold in the eight years in question stands to the credit of the United States.

One of the perplexing things about the production of gold is the question of what becomes of the entire output from the mines. For example, it is calculated that during the last two decades the world's production of gold amounted to \$3,750,000,000. Statisticians assume that during this period \$70,000,000 of gold on the average has been annually used in the arts—a sum that would amount to \$1,400,000,000 for the two decades in question. This, seemingly, would show that \$2,350,000,000 had gone into the form of money. According to recent statements, however, the increase in gold coinage for the period mentioned was only about \$1,500,000,000—or approximately \$850,000,000 less than the amount that it is estimated was coined into money. Where has the rest of this gold gone? Or statisticians made a bad guess as to the quantity of gold that is annually used in the arts?

Certain it is, at any rate, that statements as to the amount of monetary gold in existence consist largely of conjecture. That a considerable amount

of such gold is annually lost, in one way and another, is beyond doubt. Probably not much of it is buried, as was the case in former generations; but unquestionably no little proportion of it takes the form of tokens, ornaments and the like, and thus disappears from circulation. Such dispositions of gold coin make it extremely difficult to estimate with any measure of accuracy the amount of gold coin that may be in actual circulation or available for circulation.

The amount of gold coinage has increased so rapidly in recent years, however, that a diversion of comparatively a small part of it, either by loss through fire, flood or shipwreck, can have little effect on the value of the remaining mass. This is shown by the fact that the closing of the prolific South African mines during the Boer war appears not to have enhanced the value of the yellow metal perceptibly; and now that those mines are again in operation there is still less danger of an effect of this kind.

THE PROFANITY HABIT.

The profanity habit, common enough, and more than enough, almost everywhere, is quite too prevalent in Astoria. Swearing is a peculiar thing. If you don't swear, you are likely to be considered a cad; if you do swear, you become, in the eyes of church people and ministers, at least, a reprobate of darkest stain. So much for profanity proper. But as to the use of obscene language—that is quite a different thing. No man who uses such filthy terms as are commonly heard on the streets of Astoria is deserving of respect. Such language has little excuse for existence. In most cases it is used to no purpose, with no meaning.

The cigar store is the natural loafing place of men and boys, and Astoria cigar stores are not exceptional. It is in the fact that the stores are open to the street that there lies, however, the principal affinity of cigar stores and the use of profane and obscene language. The conversation of those in the cigar stores is plainly audible to people on the street. Women, on shopping tours, are compelled to pass these loafing places every day. They overhear what is being said, whether or not they wish to. And it is safe to say that if a woman waked by 10 cigar stores in the course of a stroll, she would be compelled to hear, issuing from 10 of them, language that none should use.

This is an insult to womanhood. Standing at the counters, with their backs to the street, men do not notice the passing of a woman with her child. Hence the volley of oaths and gutter talk that strikes their ears. It is degrading, vile, inexcusable.

Reform your language, boys. Take a fresh start tomorrow. If you must use the language of the gutter snipe, and curse in the words of the degenerate inhabitant of brothels, be circumspect in choosing more becoming places. Don't let it be said that a woman can not walk the streets of Astoria without being insulted at every hand.

Wash out your mouths.

In view of the very general statement of Oregonians who have returned from St. Louis that the Lewis and Clark fair has been improperly advertised, it does seem the central body should take some action in the matter. Those gentlemen have evidently forgotten that the money appropriated for the Oregon exposition was made available by the people and that it belongs to them. It is an outrage that this money should be squandered. Evidently the funds have been improperly applied or misappropriated, else the Lewis and Clark fair would not have been allowed to go without advertising. Either the Oregon exposition must be properly handled, or the legislature must decline to lend any further assistance. This may be taken in the nature of a threat, but the circumstances justify it. Portland does not own all of Oregon, and the people never intended that incompetent men should be given custody of their funds. To waste this money is disgraceful, and it is indeed time the commissioners took a hand in the matter. The success of our fair, for which all of us are so anxious, demands it.

A Chicago woman secured a divorce in twenty minutes. As long as records of that kind are possible, there will be no general uprising for novelist Meredith's proposition for ten-year marriage contracts.

We are all grieved at the dereliction of those hens that usually begin laying eggs about this time of the year bearing the initials of the presidential candidates.

The up-to-date young man appears to think that his importance is heightened in proportion to the badness of his manners.

"What will come after the trolley?" asked the electrical expert. The man who missed it, more than likely.

There are two kinds of fools in the world, male and female.

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